

The Mirror

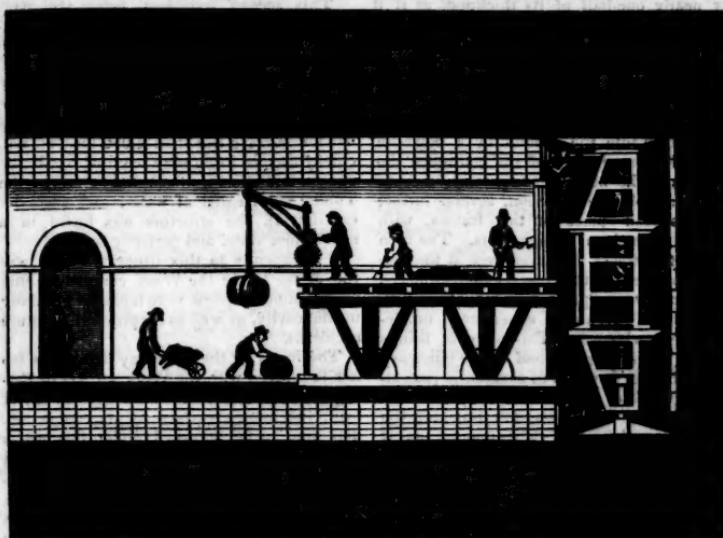
OF
LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

No. 826.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 1837.

Price 2d.

THE THAMES TUNNEL.—II.



SECTION OF THE TUNNEL, WITH A SIDE VIEW OF THE SHIELD.

We resume our description of this important Work, from page 387, vol. xxviii. of the *Mirror*, No. 809.

The progress of the Work was now destined to be stopped. On the 12th of May, while the polings in front of several cells were being removed, the ground made its way at the top of ten frames in succession. One of the top cells, in particular, was filled several times; but, by an expeditious move, and the intrepidity of one of the miners, the ground was secured, and the work was brought forward. In advancing one of the middle frames, a shovel and hammer which had been missing, were found in the way of it, having descended at least 18 feet into the ground.

Notwithstanding the loose state of the ground, the shield had gradually gained under a more substantial covering, when several vessels, coming in at a late tide, moored just over the head of the Tunnel, where no vessel had moored since the docks had been opened to the trade. It resulted from this obstruction to the stream, that those substances which protected the softer ground from the action of the tides were washed

away. The river soon made its way into the Tunnel, forming, at first, a transparent curtain between the shield and the brick-work. Every exertion made to oppose it proved fruitless, and the river soon after filled the Tunnel; this irruption taking place on the 18th of May, 1827.

On examining the hole with the diving bell, the structure was ascertained to be perfectly sound, and the shield, to all appearance, undisturbed. The repairs were immediately proceeded with by means of clay in bags, armed with small, hazel rods: about 3,000 tons of this filling, with some other soil, were required to close the hole, or rather the chasm, which was found to exceed 38 feet in depth.

At this period of the proceedings, many hundred projects were sent to the directors or to the engineer, but none were found applicable to the case.

On June 21st, the Tunnel was sufficiently clear of water to be entered; and, by the middle of August, the soil which had been driven into the arches was completely removed. The structure was quite sound; but, owing to the settlement of the new

ground, augmented too by the weight of the water, the frames were found separated at the head, the chain that united them having given way. Nothing can convey so just an idea of the impetuosity of the irruption, as the state in which the invert of the arch was found. There the brickwork was reduced by nearly one-half of its thickness, as if it had been battered with cannon-balls of small calibre; and, at the thickest part of the foundation, a hole was open, as if made by the fall of a 14-inch shell. Some heavy pieces of casting belonging to the shield had disappeared; but they were found afterwards as if driven into the ground by a powerful ram. In consequence of the continued depression of the newly-made ground, moving too in an oblique direction, several further ruptures took place in the frames, with reports as loud as cannon-shots. The men were not, however, dismayed even at the sensible movement of the ground; and, although the frames were separated by more than 2 ft. at the head, the arches experienced no derangement whatever. This state of things afforded the strongest proof of the efficiency of Mr. Brunel's system of constantly protecting, as much as possible, every part of the soil during the excavation, and finishing the structure in the most solid manner as it proceeded. The work was now resumed and extended fifty feet beyond the *first irruption*; and, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which this additional portion was effected, with a shield so very much weakened and so much out of order, no part of the structure has been more substantially completed than these fifty feet, which brought the whole to the middle of the low water.

Early in January, 1828, in consequence principally of the interruption which had taken place during the preceding week's holidays, the ground had become looser than before. On the morning of the 12th, in particular, the greatest precautions became necessary against imminent danger. The men were ordered out in time, except three, whom Mr. Brunel, jun., selected to remain with him. Every exertion was made to oppose the mass of earth, but the ground swelled and rolled in, being followed instantly by a large body of water. The rush was so violent as to force the man, on the spot where the burst took place, out of the frame of the shield on to the timber stage behind; but he escaped. Then suddenly, as Mr. Brunel was directing the three other men how to escape, the ground burst in like a volcanic eruption, with a tremendous crash. At this moment, the agitation of the air by the rush of the water was so great as to extinguish all the lights, and the water had gained the height of the middle of the men's waists. Through this total darkness, Mr. Brunel struggled on, and the rush of the water carried

ried him up the shaft. The three men, who had been knocked down with Mr. Brunel were, however, unable to extricate themselves, and were lost; as were also three others, who, it is concluded, must have been the victims of their own imprudence and curiosity, as they had not been detained in the work.

This *second eruption*, being still more sudden and formidable than the first, occasioned the apprehension that this singular Work, which had excited so much interest, not only in England, but on the Continent, might be abandoned. The obstacle was, however, removed by the same means as heretofore. No less than 4,000 tons of soil, chiefly clay in bags, were required to fill the chasm, and effect a substantial covering: the Tunnel was cleared of water, and upon re-entering it, the structure was found in a satisfactory state, and perfectly sound.

Subsequently to this interruption, such was the desire to see the Work completed, that several hundred plans were tendered for filling up the cavity, as well as for preventing future accidents.

The funds of the Company being now too low to proceed with the Work, an Act of Parliament was obtained for raising, by way of loan, the money required for its completion. The sum to be borrowed under this act is limited to 200,000*l.*; but, it was estimated that only half this sum would be wanted. The proprietors met on May 11, and resolved, that the Tunnel having been completed to the extent of 600 feet from the shaft at Rotherhithe, and there remaining only 350 feet to arrive at low water mark, near Wapping, they received with satisfaction and confidence the expressed opinion of Mr. Brunel, that the Tunnel might be completed. Notwithstanding this confidence, the subscription to the loan proceeded but slowly and, on July 5, a public meeting was convened for raising the sum required by voluntary subscription, and the contributions exceeded 5,000*l.*

The Engraving prefixed to this paper shows a longitudinal section of about 40 ft. of the Tunnel, with a side view of the shield, and the miners as well as the bricklayers at work. The sketch represents also the moving stage, with two floors, used by the miners to throw thereon, for removal, the earth they excavate; and where the bricks, cement, and other materials are placed in readiness for the bricklayers. Towards the head and foot of the shield is also shown the position of the horizontal screws, a pair of which being attached to each of the divisions, and turned so as to press against the brickwork, is used to push each division forward.

EGYPTIAN MAGIC.

(To the Editor.)

In the *Mirror*, No. 823, p. 137, is an extract from the Travels of Captain Scott, relating the feats of the West African juggler; in which it appears to me that Captain Scott is himself under a delusion, in mistaking a natural effect for an imaginary one, and then necessarily tracing it to an unnatural cause. I cannot conceive that even the weakest mind, however much inclined towards superstition, could be operated upon in the manner which he supposes. I shall endeavour briefly to recapitulate the leading facts, and then offer a probable solution of the mystery.

The first experiment was made upon a boy of 14 years of age. The magician commenced his operations by writing some lines on a piece of paper, then cutting them into slips, and finally consigning one or more of these slips to the flames. These acts I consider as neither more nor less than attempts to work upon the credulity of the spectators, by whom he was surrounded, and thus prepare them for an easy reception of the mysterious. He then placed a piece of paper, marked with hieroglyphics, beneath the skullcap of the youth, in such a manner as to cast a shade over his eyes, thus preventing him, in Captain Scott's words, "from looking up;" this done, muttering an unintelligible jargon, he proceeded to draw a variety of figures upon the boy's hand, and then very gravely emptied the contents of the ink-bottle into it, forming a pool; he then pushed the boy's head within a few inches of his hand, and commanded him to be all attention, and state if he saw anything. The dreadful incantation proceeded; all was horror; yet the lad, though trembling, declared his sensornium to be unimpressed by any vision of an unearthly character; he saw, in fact, naught but his own black face reflected on the ink, and self-esteem was too prevailing a passion in his heart, to lead him to associate with that any idea of his satanic majesty. The conjuror affirmed the boy to be prodigiously stupid; "the boy thus spurred into intelligence," remarks Captain Scott, announced that he beheld "a little boy" (no allusion to his own subtle reflection): "and what," said the conjuror, with well feigned eagerness, "does he hold in his hand?—is there not a flag?"—"Yes, sir," rejoined the youth; and thus, says Captain Scott, he was led to assert by degrees that he saw seven flags, the sultan's couch, an army, and a variety of other things. All this, Captain Scott traces to mental delusion, produced by an excited imagination predisposed to superstition.

The last trial of the necromancer's skill was upon a young lady, "convinced of the

absurdity of the joggle," and resolutely predisposed to withstand the power of an excited imagination. She, however, to the joy of the magician, and amusement of the company and of her friends, declared that under the all-powerful spell of the mighty master of the awfully mysterious, she saw divers figures! In vain did the company pour forth its logic, to convince her that all was a delusion. She continued steadfast as a rock amidst the dashing of waves; again and again did she avow the infallibility of her optic powers. At last, anticipating perhaps, the final wreck of all her reasoning faculties in the deep ocean of positive insanity, she was, by her disconcerted friends, withdrawn, to argue the merits of the case rationally, apart from the sphere of magical influence.

I now offer my solution as an apology for the obstinacy of the young lady. The shade over the eyes of the lad had marked upon it the figures which the juggler intended the boy to perceive, and the pool of ink was the mirror in which these figures were to be reflected. The lad, however, (at first,) though his nose was pushed nearly into the jetty pool, failed to recognise the reflections there existing, and this accounted for his being a stupid fellow; afterwards, he was intelligent enough. The young lady, from the commencement was more fortunate, and perceived the reflections, yet lacking a matured understanding, (for it is remarked that from all such impudent creatures the magician ever shrank amazed,) she failed to trace the positive effect to its rational source.

C.

The Naturalist.

ENTOMOLOGY.

VID. "Ant," at the end of James Wilson's Treatise on Entomology, in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, p. 303, &c.

The article in question is signed Y, and why not with an additional Y? it would then have been *too wise* for any entomologist. About the fifth line, the following words occur: "The ancients, indeed, have often noticed the habits and economy of ants, but their accounts are at all times deficient in accuracy," &c. "Great mistakes have prevailed even in later times, from the circumstance of the *larvae* of ants bearing a resemblance to grains of corn." In the first place, the writer is no out-door naturalist, or even learned in orisomology; whoever termed *owz*, *larvae*? Passing by this mistake, let us proceed. — Why the old story of Herodotus adopted by Pliny, respecting "white ants as large as wolves, whose colour was the same as cats, and whose winter occupation consisted in digging up gold," is introduced into this article, is difficult to conjecture. It does

appear that the article was to be piquant, and that Y believes the white ants to belong to the *Hymenoptera*, which is an error, as they are decidedly *Neuropterous*. In reference to the above quotation, I am inclined to think that the ancients studied the economy of insects more closely than the moderns; and if Y denies that ants store up provisions, let him look to the *Transactions of the Entomological Society*, for correction. As for the remarks of Gould and Bonnet, they may be well enough as far as they relate to European ants; but, certainly, they do not apply to ants of warmer climates. There are a few other passages which require observation:—“Ants appear to be incapable of emitting sounds;” this is questionable: and “that there is no evidence that they possess the sense of hearing,” I believe to be only an assertion copied from others. “Some species of ants collect fragments of leaves, bark, straw, &c., with which they construct more permanent nests than others.” Certainly not so permanent as the black ants of our oak trees, which have been known to endure fifty years. There are some other points which should be noticed in this article, published in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and a contribution certainly not worthy of so splendid a work.—*SCOTICUS ET ENTOMOLOGICUS.*

THE WAKE-ROBIN, (*Arum maculatum*.)

The tuberous roots of that common plant the wake-robin, called also lords and ladies, or cows and calves, are, when fresh, acrid and dangerous; “but when dried,” says Dr. Johnston, “they afford a wholesome, nutritious flour fit for making bread, and sold for that purpose in great abundance at Weymouth, and in the Portland Island. This flour is sometimes called ‘Portland sago;’ and Dr. Withering says, it forms also the ‘Cypress Powder,’ sold at a high price, and undoubtedly, a good and innocent cosmetic.”—(*Flora of Berwick-upon-Tweed*, 1, 206.)

J. H. F.

ZOOLOGY OF PARAGUAY.

THOUGH the woods are infested with noxious animals, few of them venture to measure their strength with man. The tiger, as they call it, or *onca*, is the fiercest. He comes down, Mr. Maw says, to hunt for turtle, and turns them on their backs before he commences his feast; “after which he makes a meal and goes away, leaving the remainder as provision for future occasions.” The alligator, he was repeatedly told, is so much afraid of the tiger, that he submits to be hauled out of the water, and to be devoured without making the least resistance, or even attempting to move. He also tells us, that the larger species of *onca* will attack men; and having once tasted human flesh and

blood, returns to hunt for more; and Mr. Southey has a long and very interesting note upon this in his *Tale of Paraguay*, a beautiful poem, including many exquisite pictures of South American scenery and manners. Enormous serpents infest the lakes, but the stories of them seem too marvellous to be credited. Mr. Maw does not credit the many romantic stories of these demons of the lakes, but Mr. Smyth testifies to the accounts given of immense serpents in the neighbourhood of the Amazon; and M. de la Condamine was assured that the lake serpents were from twenty-five to thirty feet long, and more than a foot in diameter. Wild boars go in numerous herds, sometimes not less than a hundred, and sloths are found of huge magnitude; but the largest animal is the *tapir* or *anta*, which grows to the size of an ox, and, like the hippopotamus, can live either on land or in the water. These woods abound with curassows, vultures, eagles, parrots, paroquets, and tomanas, (? toucans); orioles, too, are plentiful, all exhibiting a beautiful and brilliant plumage which is so general among South American birds; but though the notes of a few species are soft and plaintive, the majority utter loud and harsh screams, and very few, if any, have an agreeable song.—*Quarterly Review*, Sept., 1836, p. 27.

J. H. F.

SALUBRITY OF ELTHAM.

ELTHAM is situated on rising ground, gradually ascending from Lee, and the substratum is a loose gravel on a thick bed of white sand, on which the town is built. The rapid descent of the surface water, and the absorption of the soil, may in some degree account for the remarkable healthiness of this situation; but there is another cause which must have much to do with the modifying of diseases, more particularly those of the vital organs. Eltham is screened by Shooter’s Hill and the great woods, extending along that elevated line of country, from the north and east winds and the damp, the vapours of the Thames, and the clouds impregnated with the smoke of London, and attracted by that noble river under certain circumstances. It is a remarkable fact that the observations in ancient times of the purity of the air of Eltham, and of its being considered a desirable station for delicate people, have been confirmed on every occasion of epidemics. Consumption is a disease seldom known amongst its inhabitants. The cholera never made its appearance amongst them, although Eltham was particularly exposed from the two great roads, Dover and Maidstone, passing through the parish, and its having casual cases brought into the workhouse, which is situated in the centre of the town. Queen Elizabeth was sent to Eltham, when young, to take her airings

by the recommendation of her physicians, and delicate persons for centuries have been sent from London, to regain their health from the reputed salubrious state of the air in that district.—*Morning Advertiser*, January 27, 1837. J. H. F.

Notes of a Reader.

SIR J. HERSCHEL ON PUBLIC EDUCATION.

(Concluded from page 166.)

On the purely abstract departments of study, I shall say little, as I do not see how the mathematical course actually established in the college can well be amended, except in so far as the introduction of new branches of physical science into the course of instruction, would naturally lead to a greater development and detail of its applications, to those subjects which admit them in a form not too difficult—at the expense, perhaps, of some sacrifice of more abstruse and technical points.

In what is said I would not be understood as advocating a merely utilitarian course of instruction. Something must be conceded to ornament and elegance. The influence of a tincture of elegant literature, early imbibed, on the tastes and habits of after life is far too important to be lost sight of. The charms of well-chosen poetry, for instance, learnt in youth, takes so strong a hold on the imagination, and connect so many pleasing associations with the memory of youthful studies, that it would be a very erroneous system which would banish them as superfluous. Still the selection should be cautiously made, with reference to the matter as well as to the language. It is not easy to say on what defensible grounds the feeble *Pastorals* of Virgil, or the whining love-letters and wild extravagances of Ovid, are generally selected as the avenues by which the temple of the Latin Muse is to be approached, when there is quite easy Latin for the beginner, joined with pleasing narrative and far loftier and more poetical diction to be found in the *Aeneid*, or made the vehicle for the soundest good sense, the noblest sentiments, and the most stirring wit in Horace. But the consideration of these subjects would lead to a dissertation on classical literature. I will only observe that neither in the study of the German nor the Latin languages would I begin with poetical works.

In advocating so considerable a range of instruction as I have done, it may be reasonably asked—how is it to be accomplished? Without descending into a detail of each year's work, or of the proportion in which the several items are to be distributed among the limited number of professors whom the funds of the Institution will support, I would observe, that in many of the subjects pro-

posed, a very limited and extremely elementary course only is contemplated, and in some a true statement of their scope and fundamental principles in the form of an occasional lecture, might suffice. For example, the course of political economy might be confined to the reading of a single elementary volume of moderate extent, such as, for example, the admirable "Conversations," by Mrs. Marcet. In Ethics, a subject of chief importance, some standard work (such as Paley's *Moral Philosophy*,) might be distributed over time so as to pervade the whole duration of each pupil's frequenting the institution. For the study of natural history, the proximity of the Museum offers great advantages. An occasional visit to that collection would form an excellent comment on whatever outline of animated nature might be put into the hands of the junior classes. The best mode of disposing of the subject of jurisprudence would perhaps be by lecture but on a very limited scale. A few lectures also on the useful arts—engineering and manufactures, might, perhaps, satisfy all the requisites of the occasion.

Drawing should, of course, be taught by a drawing-master, and paid for as an extra; but the principles of perspective should be included in the course of geometry. The physical sciences—those especially which most require experimental elucidation (as all do, more or less), could hardly be taught adequately otherwise than by a regular course of lectures. As a single elementary compendium of physical science, I know nothing comparable to the "Physics" of Dr. Arnot; but without the elucidation which experimental lectures afford, the study of this, or any other work must be insufficient to communicate distinct and satisfactory notions. No provision, however, (I believe,) exists for any such course, and as no one can be expected, or indeed ought, in justice, to be suffered to perform so extensive a task gratuitously, there is no course open but one of the following, or a combination of them all:—

1st, To establish one or two lecturing professorships, with salaries from the funds of the institution;

2ndly, To provide for their support by fees from the pupils;

3rdly, To apply to the public for support by subscription;

And, lastly, to apply to Government for assistance.

That any, or all of these modes, independent of the last, would prove permanently sufficient, is much to be doubted. But no worthier or more truly useful application of a portion of the public treasure than for the maintenance of a high standard of education, in at least one point, the metropolis of the colony, can be imagined—supposing such an application made, and successful.

The professor or professors, being appointed and salaried by Government, it would devolve upon the resident masters of the college to enforce the attendance of their classes (for which no payment should be required), to aid their progress by a course of reading, prospective and retrospective, and to estimate their proficiency by public and private examination.

But in that case I would by no means confine the benefit of the lectures within the walls of the institution. The doors of the lecture-room should be thrown open, not only to the pupils, but to the public in general, on payment of a small fee in aid of the professor's salary. This would have several highly beneficial effects: 1st, The augmentation of his income would be a motive to the professor to render his lectures intelligible and attractive. 2nd, It would afford an opportunity to many adult persons, tradesmen and others, to acquire knowledge of a kind which must be useful to themselves, and have a direct tendency to develop the internal resources of the colony. 3rdly, It would probably furnish to many an attractive counteractive of intemperate and idle habits, which mainly grow out of the absence of some object of interest enough to engage the attention. 4thly, It would afford to parents and relations of the pupils an authorized and no way invidious opportunity of witnessing in person the actual process of instruction to which they are subjected. Lastly, but not of least importance, should any unforeseen circumstance, such as want of funds, occur, to suspend for a time, or permanently to cripple the efficiency of the institution itself, the lecturing professors being entirely or chiefly supported from without, and independent as (in this view of the subject) they would be of its internal arrangements, would still continue to perform their duties, so that the public instruction, though grievously wounded (as it must be, by any event, so much to be deprecated) would not be entirely annihilated, and a rallying point would always be preserved for a reconstruction of a more extended system, whenever the necessary means should be forthcoming.

I will here recapitulate the heads of the several branches of instruction I have above endeavoured to recommend.

LANGUAGES.—Latin and German, Greek Alphabet and Vocabulary.—French, *extra*.

HISTORY.—1. Ancient Greek, Roman, (Jewish?) 2. Modern—chiefly those of England and Holland; European and General in less detail.

NATURAL HISTORY.—1. General subdivisions of Organic Nature.

2. Particular History of the more remarkable Animals and Vegetables.

GEOGRAPHY.—1. Political—Ancient and Modern.

2. Physical—1. Form of the Earth.—2. Traces of its former condition.—3. Natural Sub-

divisions—4. Climates.—5. Atmosphere. Winds. Seas. Tides.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE.—Mechanics, including Hydrostatics, &c. Astronomy. Chemistry. Optics, &c.

N. B. The climate is remarkably favourable for Optical Lectures, which might be splendid and most attractive.

USEFUL ARTS.—Engineering, including the nature of the Steam Engine. Agriculture and Horticulture. Draftsmanship (*extra*.)

SOCIAL RELATIONS.—Ethics. Jurisprudence. Political Economy.

MATHEMATICS.—Arithmetic. Geometry. Analysis. Applications.

INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY.—*Nouum Organum* of Bacon, omitting his specimen of the application of his own principles to the Nature of Heat.

A few brief remarks on the subject of public examinations may not be irrelevant, and I should certainly not have hazarded them had I not been requested by you to state my impressions as to what may prove of benefit to the objects of the institution prospectively; and it is in the spirit of that request, and without the slightest wish to criticize any thing which I have observed in the only examination at which I have had the honour to be present, that I do so.

First, then, I think it would be desirable that some portion of the examination of the senior classes should be conducted in writing, and with deliberation, not only in mathematics but on other subjects. From what I have been in the habit of observing in such matters, I am disposed to think that a combination of written with oral answers, is necessary to give an effectual trial to the merits of any proficient.

In the next place, I would suggest, that the number and variety of prizes given may quite as easily be too great as too small, and that a certain reserve on this point is essential to keeping up the value of such distinctions in general.

Lastly, I should be disposed to suppress altogether a practice which I have observed to exist, of the successful candidates for prizes returning, thanks to their judges. There is no distinction which can possibly be awarded to a youth at college which ought not to have the immediate effect of humbling him in his own sight, and inducing him to retire in silence and meditation on the share which his own good fortune, or the ill-luck or deficiency of his competitors may have had in his success—on the numbers of questions which might have been proposed to him, and which he could not have answered, and on the immeasurable interval which still separates him from excellence—as well as in forming inward resolves, to let his future exertions be greater than his past. Such a frame of mind is incompatible with any kind of public declamation.

I remain, dear sir, yours, with much esteem,

J. F. W. HERSCHEL.

The Public Journals.

LETITIA, DIED AT HOME, 2ND FEBRUARY, 1836.

(From the German, *Morgen-Blatt*, 9th May, 1836.)

I lingered ! Hath it come at last,

The summons of thy doom ?

Thou heart where lay so many dead,

As in a living tomb !

Strong one, whose life embraced a grief

For which a thousand years were brief !

Where was there sorrow like to thine ?

They looks were ever bent

Upon the ship, upon the sea,

The island and its tent,

The grave o'erhung with willows hoary,

Where ignominy wedged glory.

Oh pride ! the mother's victory.

How deep, how deep it fell !

That which thy closed lips concealed,

Thy silence designed to tell :—

The eagle lies with plumage torn—

Alas ! he seemed almighty born.

Thy very name was mockery—

Of gladsome days it told ;

Thou mightst have scoffed with bitter mirth,

Like Naomi of old :

"Upon my gladness misery came,

And bitt'ress is now my name."

Full well they named thee—Niobe !

Like fate, she had with thee :

Thou saw'st thy race of noble sons

All blooming at thy knee :

Their noblest passed away :—and then

The rest were homeless, banished men.

The deepest is the silent grief

Which never tears hath known :

So stoodst thou motionless, unbent,

A monument of stone,

But half enlivened by a rose

Which sprang to wither among snows.

So stoodst thou like a giant-shape

From mightier times of man,

Long in this pigmy age which shares

With thee but this—its ban—

The doom of hov'ring like a ghost

O'er strength, and pride, and glory lost.

Tait's Magazine.

LORD DUNCAN AT CAMPERDOWN.

A PARAGRAPH which lately appeared in the papers gave rise to an excitement, sufficient to show that all the political harassing of our late years has not been sufficient to extinguish the natural feelings of Englishmen. The paragraph was to the effect, that the famous flag-ship of Lord Duncan at Camperdown, the *Venerable*, was sold, to be broken up, for 4,000*l.* A good deal of indignation was produced by this announcement, and the Admiralty came in for their full share of rebuke. But, on inquiry, it has turned out, that this violation of national feeling has not actually taken place. The *Venerable*, it is true, has been sold, and is to be broken up. But it is *not* the flag-ship of the gallant Duncan, that noble vessel having unfortunately foundered some years ago in a gale, when commanded by Captain Hunter, the Governor of New South Wales.

It is to be hoped, that the name of the *Venerable* will not be suffered to perish from the British navy, but that it will be borne for ever by a succession of proud three-deckers, as

a monument of one of the most distinguished courses of service of one of the bravest and most intelligent officers that ever commanded British seamen. During Duncan's blockade of the Texel, the mutiny which threatened the naval existence of England broke out in all the squadrons afloat. Duncan's whole fleet were seized with the infection, and sailed away. In the Texel, the Dutch fleet were ready for sea, with the French General Hoche and 40,000 troops embarked, for the invasion of Ireland. Duncan, with the *Venerable* and the *Adamant* alone, then commanded by Sir Wm. Hotham, still kept the station. By exchanging signals from time to time with the *Adamant*, he gave the Dutch the idea that his whole fleet were lying off, and ready to attack them the moment they should come out. He thus sealed up this formidable expedition. He was at last told, that the Dutch Admiral had found out the stratagem, and that his fleet were under weigh. Duncan, instead of making his escape instantly from this dangerous neighbourhood, ordered the lead to be hove. When the depth of water was reported, he looked up to his flag at the masthead, and calmly said, "Well, then, when they shall have sunk us, my flag will still fly."

But the Dutch kept within their harbours until the mutiny had ceased, and the squadron rejoined their heroic Admiral. De Winter, at last, forced out by the command of the French, gave him the opportunity he had so long wished for. The British fleet, as if to wipe off the shame of the past, fought with desperation. The whole Dutch fleet, except a few ships which fled early in the action into the adjoining harbours, were taken or destroyed. But the *Venerable* still held its superiority. Its fire was tremendous. Its first broadside, poured into the Dutch Vice-Admiral, disabled him at once, and it is said to have struck down 280 men on his decks. It afterwards ranged through the battle, sweeping every thing before it, and at one time sustaining the fire of four of the enemy's ships. It was a glorious day for the fleet and England, and one of the most important of the whole contest in its consequences, for it rendered the invasion of Ireland hopeless, and extinguished the Dutch navy for the remainder of the war.

Blackwood's Magazine.

ODE TO THE MEMORY OF CELLINI, THE FAMOUS CHASER, GOMER, CARVER, AND SWORDSMAN.

BENVENUTO CELLINI was one of the most singular men of a singular time. He was a Florentine, the son of a musician of the Court, and born in the first year of the 16th century. His father had some talent for sculpturing in ivory, and his son suddenly exhibited strong symptoms of following his taste. He

learned music with the idea of adopting it as a profession; but at the age of fifteen he determined to follow his more powerful propensity, and was bound apprentice to a goldsmith—in those days, a dealer in antiquated matters of taste of all kinds, as well as in works of gold and jewellery. At length, he tried his fortune at Rome, where his skill in the arts made him a favourite with the Pope, Clement VII. The Pope was besieged, in 1527, by the celebrated Constable of Bourbon; and Cellini became an engineer, defended the Castle of St. Angelo, and boasted of having fired the gun which killed the Constable in the assault. He then took charge of the Roman Mint, and distinguished himself by the beauty of his coinage. Weary of Rome, and, by the death of Clement, a favourite no longer, he made his way back to his native city, and there also superintended the mint. His restless mind took him to France, in the showy days of Francis I.; from France he hurried back to Rome—a luckless return, for he was charged with having plundered the papal treasures during the war, was thrown into prison in the castle which he had defended, and kept there for some years. The rest of his life was spent between France and Florence, and in designing works of every size, in various materials, and on the alternate subjects of the Christian history and the heathen mythologies. His skill was held in the highest estimation; his carvings in ivory, gold, silver, and marble, were kept in the cabinets of cardinals and princes, and he was not less remarkable for his designs in enamelling and inlaying the costly coats of armour worn at the time. The cuirass which Henry II. of France wore when he was killed in the tournament was one of his works, and exhibits to this moment evidence of the richness, variety, and elegance of his invention.

With all this taste and devotedness to the arts, Cellini had the fervour, or the fury of Italian passions. He fell furiously in love from time to time, and had no hesitation in fighting, stabbing, or perhaps poisoning his rivals. Those were the manners of the age. He thus threw himself frequently into the utmost hazard of retaliation by the dagger, or seizure by public justice. But he always found refuge in the laxity of the laws, or the vicious lenity of the priestly government, which provides an asylum for every assassin, and an absolution for every crime. At length, after 70 years of casualty and celebrity, of popular fear and kingly favour, of general contumely and European fame, this eccentric and extraordinary son of genius expired at Florence, and was honoured with a pompous burial in the Church of the Nunziata;

Ode.
Striker of medals and of men,

In that fierce age

When striking was the rage,
And Rome the lion's den;
And thou didst cut with chisel, sword, and pen,
What golden hours were thine,
What dreams divine?
Beneath the blue Italian skies
Stamping the die that never dies.
Hail to thee, carver bold,
Wrapt in the Papal mantle's fold;
Now monk, now warrior, always knew,
Sage, madman, bandit, soldier, slave;
Now deep in all art's deepest mystery,
Bidding the shapes of beauty round thee rise;
Apollos, shedding round their living beams,
Hebes, with cheeks like morning's rosy glances.
Nymphs, soft and fresh as their own crystal springs,
Cupids, with bows of flame and purple wings,
All clustering round thy shrine.
Like spirits round the master of the mine.
Then would the fit come on thee, and the strol
Around thy rival's heart or head would wheel,
Leaving thy gold unknocked, to chase the fox.
From bandits black and base
Guarding St. Peter's chair,
Shooting Venetian Dons with holy shot,
Making for Gallic rogues the world too hot;
Then, fearless of the rope,
Robbing the Pope.
Then touch'd by mighty love,
For some proud Donna's eyes
Turning the eagle to a dove;
All songs and sonnets, tears and sighs,
Pouring thy spirit to the midnight stars
On silver-stringed guitars.
Then tossing woman to the wind,
No longer love-sick, mad, and blind:
Fixing thy soul upon some matchless form,
Some visioned beauty, wild and warm,
Or carving some immortal cup or shield,
Loaded with trophies of some Grecian field;
Or brightening with fine hand the living gem,
Imbedded in the chalice's rich stem;
Or studding thick with diamonds the proud sword
Of some imperial lord.
Thy works on Fame's high pedestal
Stand, ne'er to fall.
True son of Rome!
The lamp still burns within thy tomb.
Thy cups, thy coronets, thy rings,
Are treasures fit for kings.
Thine ivy Diana we may still behold,
Bathing within their little lakes of gold,
Thy peeping Fauns from mossy cave and wood,
Thy Tritons flashing through the silver flood,
Thy nymphs, an exquisite Seraglio,
With cameos of Aurelian,
Cornelias in Cornelian,
Hercos, Leanders,
Neros and Alexanders
In Intaglio.
Yet thou art gous !
Thy brilliant spirit fled;
Thy day is done,
As if thou were a Pope,
Or some such thing
As Cardinal or King;
Yet rest in hope,
A stone has on thee, as on them, been laid

For ages past;

Yet, old Cellini's is no passing shade,

No sculptor cuts thee out, nor has earth seen,

Since first she wore her bridal robes of green,

And twilight drew the curtain round her head,

And diamond Hesper flamed above the bed,

A founder of thy east,

Clear, bold, magnificent, and vast,

Not Death himself that sinner of renown;

Within the grave can cool thy metal down;

Though there earth's crowns are dust,

Immortal still, still bright and bold,

Thou'st laid in Fame's eternal mould.

Blackwood's Magazine.



THE CHELTENHAM LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTION.

SEVERAL experiments have been made to form a Literary Society at Cheltenham; but these praiseworthy efforts have been remarkably unsuccessful. The earliest of these attempts appears to have originated with the celebrated Dr. Jenner, in 1813-14, who was then a resident physician in the town. Although the Doctor had for co-operators, Dr. Charles Parry, (now of Bath,) Drs. Boisragon, Baron, and Newell, the society did not hold together more than a year. About five years after its dissolution, in 1820, a similar attempt was made by Dr. Jenner, but with a like result. Within five years more, however, a Mechanics' Institute was established, but closed its existence in about a year. Seven years subsequently, a scheme was mooted for the formation of a Scientific Institution, which also failed, but led to the establishment of a Literary and Philosophical Institution in 1823; the inaugural address being delivered by Dr. Boisragon, one of the co-adjudicators of Dr. Jenner; and who, in 1834, was elected President, and continues so to the present day. Hitherto the meetings of the Society had been held in the Imperial Pump-room, but this arrangement becoming inconvenient, the members resolved to erect a suitable building for the purposes of the Institution; the funds being raised in shares nearly all of which were subscribed for by the members. Accordingly, a good site was chosen in the line of the Promenade Villas, at Cheltenham, and late in the autumn of 1835, the building was commenced; and proceeded so rapidly as to allow the Society to take possession of the premises in June following. The front was

not, however, commenced, as its cost was estimated at 4094; and the funds in hand were low; but, in a few weeks, subscriptions poured in, the design was proceeded in, and is, in all probability, now complete, as shown in the above wood-cut. Of this classical structure, the following are the details, by the architect, Mr. R. W. Jerread:

"The portico of the Institution is, *in all its proportions*, the model of the Temple of Theseus.

"The building of the Temple of Theseus was a work attributed to the age of Pericles, in the year that Apepision was Archon, about the fourth year of the 77th Olympian, 467 years before Christ. It was built of Pentelic marble, and was honoured at its opening by games and festivals; and also by the celebrated contest between Eschylus and Sophocles.

"The front of the portico of the Institution, like Theseus, is hexastyle, having six columns, which are fluted, and also in the arrangement of its intercolumniations which approaches near to the Systylos, but which has not quite its (the Systylos) intercolumniations of two diameters.

"The tympanum of the pediment, like that of Theseus, is plain, without sculpture.

"The metopes in front of Theseus, ten in number, were sculptured in alto-relievo, representing the labours of Hercules; on either side four metopes only were sculptured, representing eight of the achievements of Theseus.

"In the portico of the Institution these are, from motives of economy, left plain; but the metopes are deep seated, to admit their being

added hereafter, (which they might be at a comparatively small cost in terra cotta.)"

"The proportions and developement of the soffit of the corona; the mutules, with the distribution of their guttae; the triglyphs, and also the antæ, are preserved with the utmost fidelity.

"The portico being the architectural feature intended to attract most attention, the remainder of the front is purposely preserved tranquil and unobtrusive."

The new building was opened on Aug. 31, 1836, by a meeting, at which the Bishop of Gloucester, one of the patrons of the Society, presided.

"Stimulated by the success which rewarded the exertions of the Founders of the Literary and Scientific Institution, several of the most active and intelligent of the industrious classes, in the spring of 1834, established a Mechanics' Institution, in Albion Street, where the members still regularly hold their meetings. A third Society has also subsequently been formed, entitled the *Athenæum*. The rooms of this Society are in Portland Street."

We need scarcely add our best wishes for the further success of these Institutions. But, we must add a word in favour of a little work published at Cheltenham, which merits and is likely to receive extensive patronage, judging from the taste for literature and science which the prosperity of the above societies shows to exist in the town. The work to which we allude is the *Cheltenham Annuaire* for 1837, a kind of useful Annual-Almanac, with clever papers contributed by master-hands. From this respectable source the prefixed Engraving has been derived.

• Of the labours of Hercules, recorded in the metopes of the Temple of Theseus, nine only are intelligible; and of the achievements of Theseus, only five. The remainder are defaced by time; and it so occurs that the number of the metopes over the Literary Institution portico, namely, fourteen, corresponds exactly with the number of the above subjects.

New Books.

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART. (Vol. I.)

[This portion of Mr. Lockhart's long-promised biography of his illustrious father-in-law will be warmly welcomed throughout the world—for what portion of the earth, save its untrdden wilds, has not the genius of Scott already reached and gladdened with its philanthropy. It is an honour to our age to have amply appreciated the productions of this genius; and this estimate is especially a healthy indication of the public mind; since few of the readers of Scott have failed to recognise in his writings their excellent aim and object. On their moral beauty rests their existence in future ages. Their natu-

ralness is their main charm, with which they will win their way to posterity; and, as human nature is the same in all ages, this attraction will last so long as man himself. Every minute circumstance tending to show the developement of the mind of our great and good Poet and Novelist—in his youthful days—his industry and well-earned fame, and the untaught honour with which he went down to the grave—must indeed be interesting to the English reader—nay to the world. That all this should be recorded appears to have been the wish of Sir Walter Scott; and, in such a wish there could be no trace of vanity, for he had indeed received all that earthly honour could bestow; added to which must have been the consciousness of having directed his genius to none but noble objects. Mr. Lockhart, in obedience to the instructions of Sir Walter Scott's last will, had made some progress in a narrative of his personal history, before there was discovered, in an old cabinet at Abbotsford, an autobiographical fragment, composed by him in 1808, shortly after the publication of his *Marmion*. This "fortunate accident" rendered it necessary that Mr. Lockhart should altogether remodel the work which he had commenced. The first chapter of the volume before us then consists of the above fragment, which gives a clear outline of Scott's early life, down to the period of his call to the bar—July, 1792. All the notes appended to this chapter are also by himself; and seem to have been added in 1826. To this autobiography, Mr. Lockhart has appended five chapters of "Illustrations," being the substance of his own collections up to the period in question. Thence the volume proceeds to the publication of *Sir Tristem*, in 1804. Our extracts in the present sheet are chiefly from the gem of this first volume—the autobiography, in praise of which not a word need be said; it being so natural and striking as to come upon us with all the freshness of entire novelty, though the reader may have been previously acquainted with the leading incidents of Scott's life from other sources.]

Sir Walter Scott's Family.

Walter Scott, my father, was born in 1729, and educated to the profession of a writer to the Signet. He was the eldest of a large family, several of whom I shall have occasion to mention with a tribute of sincere gratitude. My father was a singular instance of a man rising to eminence in a profession for which nature had in some degree unfitted him. He had indeed a turn for labour, and a pleasure in analyzing the abstruse feudal doctrines connected with conveyancing, which would probably have rendered him unrivaled in the line of a special pleader, had there been such a profession in Scotland; but in the actual business of the profession which he em-

braced, in that sharp and intuitive perception which is necessary in driving bargains for himself and others, in availing himself of the wants, necessities, caprices, and follies of some, and guarding against the knavery and malice of others, uncle Toby himself could not have conducted himself with more simplicity than my father. Most attorneys have been suspected, more or less justly, of making their own fortune at the expense of their clients—my father's fate was to vindicate his calling from the stain in one instance, for in many cases his clients contrived to ease him of considerable sums. Many worshipful and be-knighted names occur to my memory, who did him the honour to run in his debt to the amount of thousands, and to pay him with a lawsuit, or a commission of bankruptcy, as the case happened. But they are gone to a different accounting, and it would be ungenerous to visit their disgrace upon their descendants. My father was wont also to give openings, to those who were pleased to take them, to pick a quarrel with him. He had a zeal for his clients which was almost ludicrous: far from coldly discharging the duties of his employment towards them, he thought for them, felt for their honour as for his own, and rather risked disobliging them than neglecting anything to which he conceived their duty bound them. If there was an old mother or aunt to be maintained, he was, I am afraid, too apt to administer to their necessities from what the young heir had destined exclusively to his pleasures. This ready discharge of obligations which the Civilians tell us are only natural and not legal, did not, I fear, recommend him to his employers. Yet his practice was, at one period of his life, very extensive. He understood his business theoretically, and was early introduced to it by a partnership with George Chalmers, Writer to the Signet, under whom he had served his apprenticeship.

His person and face were uncommonly handsome, with an expression of sweetness of temper, which was not fallacious; his manners were rather formal, but full of genuine kindness, especially when exercising the duties of hospitality. His general habits were not only temperate, but severely abstemious; but upon a festive occasion, there were few whom a moderate glass of wine exhilarated to such a lively degree. His religion, in which he was devoutly sincere, was Calvinism of the strictest kind, and his favourite study related to church history. I suspect the good old man was often engaged with Knox and Spottiswoode's folios, when, immured in his solitary room, he was supposed to be immersed in professional researches. In his political principles he was a steady friend to freedom, with a bias, however, to the monarchical part of our constitution, which he considered as peculiarly

exposed to danger during the later years of his life. He had much of ancient Scottish prejudice respecting the forms of marriages, funerals, christenings, and so forth, and was always vexed at any neglect of etiquette upon such occasions. As his education had not been upon an enlarged plan, it could not be expected that he should be an enlightened scholar, but he had not passed through a busy life without observation; and his remarks upon times and manners often exhibited strong traits of practical though untaught philosophy.

In April, 1758, my father married Anne Rutherford, eldest daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, professor of medicine in the University of Edinburgh. He was one of those pupils of Boerhaave to whom the school of medicine in our northern metropolis owes its rise, and a man distinguished for professional talent, for lively wit, and for literary acquirements. Dr. Rutherford was twice married. His first wife, of whom my mother is the sole surviving child, was a daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton, a family which produced many distinguished warriors during the middle ages, and which, for antiquity and honourable alliances, may rank with any in Britain. My grandfather's second wife was Miss Mackay, by whom he had a second family, of whom are now (1808) alive, Dr. Daniel Rutherford, professor of botany in the University of Edinburgh, and Misses Janet and Christian Rutherford, amiable and accomplished women.

His Birth.

I was born, as I believe, on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to my father, at the head of the College Wynd. It was pulled down, with others, to make room for the northern front of the new College. I was an uncommonly healthy child, but had nearly died in consequence of my first nurse being ill of a consumption, a circumstance which she chose to conceal, though to do so was murder to both herself and me. She went privately to consult Dr. Black, the celebrated professor of chemistry, who put my father on his guard. The woman was dismissed, and I was consigned to a healthy peasant, who is still alive to boast of her *laddie* being what she calls a *grand gentleman*.* I showed every sign of health and strength until I was about eighteen months old. One night, I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed, and after being chased about the room, was apprehended and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility. In the morning I was discovered to be affected with the fever which often accompanies the cutting of large teeth. It held me three days. On the fourth, when they went to

* She died in 1810.—[1826.]

bathe me as usual, they discovered that I had lost the power of my right leg. My grandfather, an excellent anatomist as well as physician, the late worthy Alexander Wood, and many others of the most respectable of the faculty, were consulted. There appeared to be no dislocation or sprain; blisters and other topical remedies were applied in vain. When the efforts of regular physicians had been exhausted, without the slightest success, my anxious parents, during the course of many years, eagerly grasped at every prospect of cure which was held out by the promise of empirics, or of ancient ladies or gentlemen who conceived themselves entitled to recommend various remedies, some of which were of a nature sufficiently singular. But the advice of my grandfather, Dr. Rutherford, that I should be sent to reside in the country, to give the chance of natural exertion, excited by free air and liberty, was first resorted to, and before I have the recollection of the slightest event, I was, agreeably to this friendly counsel, an inmate in the farm-house of Sandy-Knowe.

His Childhood.

It is here at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tarfar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farm-house, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George MacDougal of Makerstoun, father of the present Sir Henry Hay Mac Dougal joining in this kindly attempt. He was, God knows how,* a relation of ours, and I still recollect him in his old fashioned military habit (he had been colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked hat, deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-coloured coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier and the infant

* He was a second cousin of my grandfather. Isobel MacDougal, wife of Walter, the first Laird of Eastburn, and mother of Walter Scott, called Beadie, was grand-aunt, I take it, to the late Sir George MacDougal. There was always great friendship between us and the Makerstoun family. It singularly happened that at the burial of the late Sir Henry MacDougal, my cousin William Scott younger of Eastburn, and I myself were the nearest blood-relations present, although our connection was of so old a date, and ranked as pall-bearers accordingly.—[1896.]

wrapped in his sheepskin would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year, for Sir George MacDougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period.

My grandmother continued for some years to take charge of the farm, assisted by my father's second brother, Mr. Thomas Scott, who resided at Crailing, as factor or land-steward for Mr. Scott of Dunesfield, then proprietor of that estate. This was during the heat of the American war, and I remember being as anxious on my uncle's weekly visits (for we heard news at no other time) to hear the defeat of Washington, as if I had had some deep and personal cause of antipathy to him. I know not how this was combined with a very strong prejudice in favour of the Stuart family, which I had originally imbibed from the songs and tales of the Jacobites. This latter political propensity was deeply confirmed by the stories told in my hearing of the cruelties exercised in the executions at Carlisle, and in the Highlands, after the battle of Culloden. One or two of our own distant relations had fallen on that occasion, and I remember detesting the name of Cumberland with more than infant hatred. Mr. Curle, farmer at Yetbyre, husband of one of my aunts, had been present at their execution; and it was probably from him that I first heard these tragic tales which made so great an impression on me. The local information, which I conceive had some share in forming my future taste and pursuits, I derived from the old songs and tales which then formed the amusement of a retired country family. My grandmother, in whose youth the old Border depredations were matter of recent tradition, used to tell me many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Teller, of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes—merry men all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated *Diel of Littledean*, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story, grave and gay, comic and warlike. Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. *Automates and Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany* were my favourites, although at a later period an odd volume of *Josephus's Wars of the Jews* divided my partiality.

My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart. The ballad of Hardyknute I was early master of, to the great annoyance of almost our only visitor, the worthy clergyman of the parish, Dr. Duncan,

who had not patience to have a sober chat interrupted by my shouting forth this ditty. Methinks I now see his tall, thin, emaciated figure, his legs cased in clapped gambadoes, and his face of a length that would have rivalled the Knight of La Mancha's, and hear him exclaiming, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as were that child is." With this little acidity, which was natural to him, he was a most excellent and benevolent man, a gentleman in every feeling, and altogether different from those of his order who cringe at the tables of the gentry, or domineer and riot at those of the yeomanry. In his youth he had been chaplain in the family of Lord Marchmont—had seen Pope—and could talk familiarly of many characters who had survived the Augustan age of Queen Anne. Though valitudinous, he lived to be nearly ninety, and to welcome to Scotland his son, Colonel William Duncan, who with the highest character for military and civil merit, had made a considerable fortune in India. In [1795], a few days before his death, I paid him a visit, to inquire after his health. I found him emaciated to the last degree, wrapped in a tartan night-gown, and employed with all the activity of health and youth in correcting a history of the Revolution, which he intended should be given to the public when he was no more. He read me several passages with a voice naturally strong, and which the feelings of an author then raised above the depression of age and declining health. I begged him to spare this fatigue which could not but injure his health. His answer was remarkable. "I know," he said, "that I cannot survive a fortnight—and what signifies an exertion that can at worst only accelerate my death a few days?" I marvelled at the composure of this reply, for his appearance sufficiently vouches the truth of his prophecy, and rode home to my uncle's (then my abode), musing what there could be in the spirit of authorship that could inspire its votaries with the courage of martyrs. He died within less than the period he assigned—with which event I close my digression.

Visits Bath and London.

I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt, although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits any thing but pleasure or amusement, undertook as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitors. My health was by this time a good deal confirmed by the country air, and the influence of that imperceptible and unfatiguing exercise to which the good sense

of my grandfather had subjected me; for when the day was fine, I was usually carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd, among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air, and, in a word, I who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless decrepitude, was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child—*non sine die amissus infans*.

We went to London by sea, and it may gratify the curiosity of minute biographers to learn, that our voyage was performed in the Duchess of Buccleuch, Captain Beaton, master. At London we made a short stay, and saw some of the common shows exhibited to strangers. When, twenty-five years afterwards, I visited the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, I was astonished to find how accurate my recollections of these celebrated places of visitation proved to be, and I have ever since trusted more implicitly to my juvenile reminiscences. At Bath, where I lived about a year, I went through all the usual discipline of the pump-room and baths, but I believe without the least advantage to my lameness. During my residence at Bath, I acquired the rudiments of reading at a day-school, kept by an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, although I think I did not attend her a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest. Afterwards, when grown a big boy, I had a few lessons from Mr. Stalker of Edinburgh, and finally from the Rev. Mr. Clure. But I never acquired a just pronunciation, nor could I read with much propriety.

In other respects my residence at Bath is marked by very pleasing recollections. The venerable John Home, author of *Douglas*, was then at the watering-place, and paid much attention to my aunt and to me. His wife, who has survived him, was then an invalid, and used to take the air in her carriage on the Downs, when I was often invited to accompany her. But the most delightful recollections of Bath are dated after the arrival of my uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who introduced me to all the little amusements which suited my age, and, above all, to the theatre. The play was *As You Like It*; and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalized at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, "A'nt

which hereafter, (which they might be at a comparatively small cost in terra cotta.)⁹

"The proportions and development of the merit of the scenes; the mosaics, with the distribution of their guitts; the triptychs, and also the acts, are preserved with the utmost fidelity.

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART. (Vol. I.)

[THIS portion of Mr. Lockhart's long-promised biography of his illustrious father-in-law will be warmly welcomed throughout the world—for what portion of the earth, save its unbroken wilds, has not the genius of Scott already reached and gladdened with its philosophy. It is an honour to our age to have amply appreciated the productions of this genius; and this estimate is especially a healthy indication of the public mind; since few of the readers of Scott have failed to recognise in his writings their excellent aim and object. On their moral beauty rests their existence in future ages. Their *natura-*

rebus is their main charm, with which they will win their way to posterity; and, as human nature is the same in all ages, this attraction will last as long as man himself. Every minute circumstance tending to show the development of the mind of our great and good Poet and Novelist—in his youthful days—his industry and well-earned fame, and the unimpeachable honour with which he went down to the grave—must indeed be interesting to the English reader—nay to the world. That all this should be recorded appears to have been the wish of Sir Walter Scott; and, in such a wish there could be no trace of vanity, for he had indeed received all that earthly honour could bestow; added to which must have been the consciousness of having directed his genius to none but noble objects. Mr. Lockhart, in obedience to the instructions of Sir Walter Scott's last will, had made some progress in a narrative of his personal history, before there was discovered, in an old cabinet at Abbotsford, an autobiographical fragment, composed by him in 1808, shortly after the publication of his *Marmion*. This "fortunate accident" rendered it necessary that Mr. Lockhart should altogether remodel the work which he had commenced. The first chapter of the volume before us then consists of the above fragment, which gives a clear outline of Scott's early life, down to the period of his call to the bar—July, 1792. All the notes appended to this chapter are also by himself; and seem to have been added in 1826. To this autobiography, Mr. Lockhart has appended five chapters of "Illustrations," being the substance of his own collections up to the period in question. Thence the volume proceeds to the publication of *Sir Tristem*, in 1804. Our extracts in the present sheet are chiefly from the gem of this first volume—the autobiography, in praise of which not a word need be said; it being so natural and striking as to come upon us with all the freshness of entire novelty, though the reader may have been previously acquainted with the leading incidents of Scott's life from other sources.]

Sir Walter Scott's Family.

Walter Scott, my father, was born in 1771, and educated to the profession of a writer to the Signet. He was the eldest of a large family, several of whom I shall have occasion to mention with a tribute of sincere gratitude. My father was a singular instance of a man rising to eminence in a profession for which nature had in some degree unfitted him. He had indeed a turn for labour, and a pleasure in analysing the abstruse feudal doctrines connected with conveyancing, which would probably have rendered him unrivalled in the line of a special pleader; had there been such a profession in Scotland; but in the actual business of the profession which he en-

ised, in that sharp and intuitive perception which is necessary in driving bargains for himself and others, in availing himself of the wants, necessities, caprices, and follies of men, and guarding against the knavery and malice of others, uncle Toby himself could not have conducted himself with more simplicity than my father. Most attorneys have been prompted, more or less justly, of making their own fortunes at the expense of their clients—my father's fate was to vindicate his client from the stain in one instance, for in many cases his clients contrived to case him of considerable sums. Many worshipful and knightly names occur to my memory, who did him the honour to run in his debt to the amount of thousands, and to pay him with a lawsuit, or a commission of bankruptcy, as the case happened. But they are gone to a different accounting, and it would be ungracious to visit their disgrace upon their descendants. My father was wont also to give openings, to those who were pleased to take them, to pick a quarrel with him. He had a seal for his clients which was almost ludicrous: far from coldly discharging the duties of his employment towards them, he sought for them, fail for their honour as for his own, and rather risked discrediting them than neglecting anything to which he conceived their duty bound them. If there was an old mother or aunt to be maintained, he was, I am afraid, too apt to administer to their necessities from what the young heir had destined exclusively to his pleasures. This ready discharge of obligations which the Civilians tell us are only natural and not legal, did not, I fear, recommend him to his employers. Yet his practice was, at one period of his life, very extensive. He understood his business theoretically, and was early introduced to it by a partnership with George Chalmers, Writer to the Signet, under whom he had served his apprenticeship.

His person and face were uncommonly handsome, with an expression of sweetness of temper, which was not fallacious; his manners were rather formal, but full of genuine kindness, especially when exercising the duties of hospitality. His general habits were not only temperate, but severely abstemious; but upon a festive occasion, there were few whom a moderate glass of wine exhilarated to such a lively degree. His religion, in which he was devoutly sincere, was Calvinism of the strictest kind, and his favourite study related to church history. I suspect the good old man was often engaged with Knox and Spottiswoode's folios, when, immersed in his solitary room, he was supposed to be immersed in professional researches. In his political principles he was a steady friend to freedom, with a bias, however, to the monarchical part of our constitution, which he considered as peculiarly

exposed to danger during the later years of his life. He had much of ancient Scotch prejudice respecting the forms of marriage, funerals, christenings, and so forth, and was always vexed at any neglect of etiquette upon such occasions. As his education had not been upon an enlarged plan, it could not be expected that he should be an enlightened scholar; but he had not passed through a busy life without observation; and his remarks upon times and manners often exhibited strong traits of practical though untaught philosophy.

In April, 1756, my father married Anne Rutherford, eldest daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, professor of medicine in the University of Edinburgh. He was one of those pupils of Bourchauze to whom the school of medicine in our northern metropolis owes its rise, and a man distinguished for professional talent, for lively wit, and for literary acquirements. Dr. Rutherford was twice married. His first wife, of whom my mother is the sole surviving child, was a daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton, a family which produced many distinguished warriors during the middle ages, and which, for antiquity and honourable alliances, may rank with any in Britain. My grandfather's second wife was Miss Mackay, by whom he had a second family, of whom are now (1808) alive, Dr. Daniel Rutherford, professor of botany in the University of Edinburgh, and Misses Janet and Christian Rutherford, amiable and accomplished women.

His Birth.

I was born, as I believe, on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to my father, at the head of the College Wynd. It was pulled down, with others, to make room for the northern front of the new College. I was an uncommonly healthy child, but had nearly died in consequence of my first nurse being ill of a consumption, a circumstance which she chose to conceal, though to do so was murder to both herself and me. She went privately to consult Dr. Black, the celebrated professor of chemistry, who put my father on his guard. The woman was dismissed, and I was consigned to a healthy peasant, who is still alive to boast of her *toddie* being what she calls a *grand gentleman*.* I showed every sign of health and strength until I was about eighteen months old. One night, I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed, and after being chased about the room, was apprehended and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility. In the morning I was discovered to be afflicted with the fever which often accompanies the cutting of large teeth. It held me these days. On the fourth, when they went to

* She died in 1816.—[1808.]

bathe me as usual, they discovered that I had lost the power of my right leg. My grandfather, an excellent anatomist as well as physician, the late worthy Alexander Wood, and many others of the most respectable of the faculty, were consulted. There appeared to be no dislocation or sprain; blisters and other topical remedies were applied in vain. When the efforts of regular physicians had been exhausted, without the slightest success, my anxious parents, during the course of many years, eagerly grasped at every prospect of cure which was held out by the promise of empirics, or of ancient ladies or gentlemen who conceived themselves entitled to recommend various remedies, some of which were of a nature sufficiently singular. But the advice of my grandfather, Dr. Rutherford, that I should be sent to reside in the country, to give the chance of natural exertion, excited by free air and liberty, was first resorted to, and before I have the recollection of the slightest event, I was, agreeably to this friendly counsel, an inmate in the farm-house of Sandy-Knowe.

His Childhood.

It is here at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies resorted to to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farm-house, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George MacDougal of Makersoun, father of the present Sir Henry Hay Mac Dougal joining in this kindly attempt. He was, God knows how,* a relation of ours, and I still recollect him in his old fashioned military habit (he had been colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked hat, deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-coloured coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier and the infant

* He was a second cousin of my grandfather, Isobel MacDougal, wife of Walter, the first Laird of Raeburn, and mother of Walter Scott, called Beardie, my grand aunt, I take it, to the late Sir George MacDougal. There was always great friendship between us and the MacKersoun family. It singularly happened, that at the burial of the late Sir Henry MacDougal, my cousin William Scott younger of Raeburn, and I myself were the nearest blood-relations present, although our connexion was of so old a date, and ranked as pall-bearers accordingly.—[1896.]

wrapped in his sheepskin would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year, for Sir George MacDougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period.

My grandmother continued for some years to take charge of the farm, assisted by my father's second brother, Mr. Thomas Scott, who resided at Crailing, as factor or land-steward for Mr. Scott of Danesfield, then proprietor of that estate. This was during the heat of the American war, and I remember being as anxious on my uncle's weekly visits (for we heard news at no other time) to hear the defeat of Washington, as if I had had some deep and personal cause of antipathy to him. I know not how this was combined with a very strong prejudice in favour of the Stuart family, which I had originally imbibed from the songs and tales of the Jacobites. This latter political propensity was deeply confirmed by the stories told in my hearing of the cruelties exercised in the executions at Carlisle, and in the Highlands, after the battle of Culloden. One or two of our own distant relations had fallen on that occasion, and I remember detesting the name of Cumberland with more than infant hatred. Mr. Curle, farmer at Yetbyre, husband of one of my aunts, had been present at their execution; and it was probably from him that I first heard these tragic tales which made so great an impression on me. The local information, which I conceive had some share in forming my future taste and pursuits, I derived from the old songs and tales which then formed the amusement of a retired country family. My grandmother, in whose youth the old Border depredations were matter of recent tradition, used to tell me many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Teller, of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes—merrymen all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated *Diel of Littledean*, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story, grave and gay, comic and warlike. Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. *Automathes* and *Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany* were my favourites, although at a later period an odd volume of *Josephus's Wars of the Jews* divided my partiality.

My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Jane Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart. The ballad of *Hardyline* I was early master of, to the great annoyance of almost our only visitor, the worthy clergyman of the parish, Dr. Duncan,

who had not patience to have a sober chat interrupted by my shouting forth this ditty. Methinks I now see his tall, thin, emaciated figure, his legs cased in clasped gambadoes, and his face of a length that would have rivalled the Knight of La Mancha's, and hear him exclaiming, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as were that child is." With this little acidity, which was natural to him, he was a most excellent and benevolent man, a gentleman in every feeling, and altogether different from those of his order who cringe at the tables of the gentry, or domineer and riot at those of the yeomanry. In his youth he had been chaplain in the family of Lord Marchmont—had seen Pope—and could talk familiarly of many characters who had survived the Augustan age of Queen Anne. Though valiantly, he lived to be nearly ninety, and to welcome to Scotland his son, Colonel William Duncan, who with the highest character for military and civil merit, had made a considerable fortune in India. In [1795], a few days before his death, I paid him a visit, to inquire after his health. I found him emaciated to the last degree, wrapped in a tartan night-gown, and employed with all the activity of health and youth in correcting a history of the Revolution, which he intended should be given to the public when he was no more. He read me several passages with a voice naturally strong, and which the feelings of an author then raised above the depression of age and declining health. I begged him to spare this fatigue which could not but injure his health. His answer was remarkable. "I know," he said, "that I cannot survive a fortnight—and what signifies an exertion that can at worst only accelerate my death a few days?" I marvelled at the composure of this reply, for his appearance sufficiently vouched the truth of his prophecy, and rode home to my uncle's (then my abode), musing what there could be in the spirit of authorship that could inspire his votaries with the courage of martyrs. He died within less than the period he assigned—with which event I close my digression.

Visits Bath and London.

I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt, although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement, undertaken as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient votaries. My health was by this time a good deal confirmed by the country air, and the influence of that imperceptible and unfatiguing exercise to which the good sense

of my grandfather had subjected me; for when the day was fine, I was usually carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd, among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air, and, in a word, I who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless decrepitude, was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child—*non sine diis animosus infans*.

We went to London by sea, and it may gratify the curiosity of minute biographers to learn, that our voyage was performed in the Duchess of Buccleuch, Captain Beston, master. At London we made a short stay, and saw some of the common shows exhibited to strangers. When, twenty-five years afterwards, I visited the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, I was astonished to find how accurate my recollections of these celebrated places of visitation proved to be, and I have ever since trusted more implicitly to my juvenile reminiscences. At Bath, where I lived about a year, I went through all the usual discipline of the pump-room and baths, but I believe without the least advantage to my lameness. During my residence at Bath, I acquired the rudiments of reading at a day-school, kept by an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, although I think I did not attend her a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest. Afterwards, when grown a big boy, I had a few lessons from Mr. Stalker of Edinburgh, and finally from the Rev. Mr. Clure. But I never acquired a just pronunciation, nor could I read with much propriety.

In other respects my residence at Bath is marked by very pleasing recollections. The venerable John Home, author of Douglas, was then at the watering-place, and paid much attention to my aunt and to me. His wife, who has survived him, was then an invalid, and used to take the air in her carriage on the Downs, when I was often invited to accompany her. But the most delightful recollections of Bath are dated after the arrival of my uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who introduced me to all the little amusements which suited my age, and, above all, to the theatre. The play was *As You Like It*; and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalized at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, "A'n't

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they brothers?" A few weeks' residence at home convinced me, who had till then been an only child in the house of my grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers was a very natural event. 204

TOUR THROUGH FRANCE, SWITZERLAND,
AND ITALY.

By Sir Arthur Brooks Faulkner.

This is a moderate duodecimo of "Rambles Details," in the form of Letters to the tourist's friend, Lord Brougham. They are full of entertaining criticism and amusing observation, though not unmixed with "baser matter," namely, intolerance, to an extent hardly to be expected in a book of the year 1836, and illiberality, scarcely to be looked for in a discriminating mind, such as the author elsewhere proves himself to possess. At the same time, the topics discussed or introduced are by no means trite or trifling, and the details of some of them will, doubtless, be acceptable to the noble and learned person to whom they are addressed: as schools at Havre; the *Société de Civilisation*, and the Foundling Hospital, at Paris; Swiss Education; Censorship of the Press at Turin; Schools of Florence; Law and Police; Education, Growing Knowledge and Censorship at Naples, &c. Among the signs of the times in the latter city, by the way, Sir Arthur Faulkner mentions having seen an advertisement announcing the sale of Lord Brougham's work on the advantages and pleasures of science, posted at the corners of the streets; the next sentence records the suppression of a book only because it contained a passage describing Tasso as "a man who added lustre to the reign of his sovereign."

From such a work as the present, the reader may, however, expect much that is both profitable and amusing, as we proceed to show the volume contains.]

Fontainebleau.*—Relics of Napoleon.

Soon after we left Paris we started for Fontainebleau, in company with General —, a dear friend of above a quarter of a century's standing, and spent a delicious week. This ancient town, in appearance and cleanliness, struck me as one of the most English in all France. The streets are swept every day before ten o'clock, and the houses furnished and accommodated with every convenience that you find in England, always excepting one, of which nobody, who has ever sojourned in France, needs to be reminded. Fontainebleau enjoys, the whole week through, the uninterrupted silence of a Presbyterian Sunday, and contrasted most agreeably with the helter-skelter of Paris, from which we had just made our escape. We enjoyed,

* For an Engraving of the Palace, see *Mirror*, vol. xxii. p. 289.

besides, the luxury of a reading-room stored with the Paris journals, and where there is a diurnal levee of quidnuncs, all as anxious as ourselves about our English news, and discussing men and measures with a freedom of remark, not out-done by the most furious of our radicals.

Louis-Philippe spares no pains in the restoration of the palace. The artists employed in the work are required, like good reformers, to carry on their alterations and improvements strictly in the style of the building—a rule which, however, does not appear to be very closely attended to; nor is it indeed very practicable, as, in some apartments, the ancient and inimitable frescoes have perished irrecoverably. I could detect many modernisms, especially a new gateway near to the quadrigle of Henry IV., which is in no respect superior to the entrance of a good, English country mansion. The repairs are under the direction of a Comte Moutalieu, one of the most accomplished élèves of the polytechnic school.

A great deal, in the interior of the palace, remains as it was under the late dynasty. Napoleon's throne has undergone no change, and the canopy and draperies continue in almost unaltered magnificence. The emperor's bed stands just as it was left at his abdication; so also Josephine's, and her bakh, which have never been used since.

In the imperial library I noticed several English authors, of which the greater portion are books of science, dictionaries, registers, voyages and travels, and a Bible in ten or twelve quarto volumes.

To me the only very interesting objects about Fontainebleau were those connected with Napoleon. The memory of this extraordinary person eclipses all the other glories of its history. Of the emperor's abdication I made a copy on the same little, round, mahogany table, (about two feet diameter,) on which he composed and signed it. This table prevents, likewise, a memorial of the transaction, graven on a brass plate, dated 6th April, 1814. The words of the rough draught, in fac simile of the emperor's hand, are as I here copy them, with the corrections introduced:—

"Les puissances alliées ayant proclamé que l'Empereur Napoléon était le seul obstacle au l'établissement de la paix en Europe, fidèle à son serment déclare qu'il renonce pour lui et ses successeurs au trône de France et d'Italie et qu'il fidèle à son serment (hence the words *n'est pas* are erased,) n'est aucun sacrifice personnel même celui de la vie qu'il ne soit prêt à faire (*ou la bête erased.*) aux intérêts de la (action erased) France."

The above is taken from the first sketch in lithograph, and is hung up over the chimney-piece, headed "Calque du brouillon écrit de sa main." There is appended the following note:

"Note.—L'abdication que Napoléon a signé ass.

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la date de 6 Avril, est la mise au net de ce brouillon, manuscrit de la main du Baron Pain, son secrétaire à cabinet."

The original is so miserably scrawled that Louis-Philippe was obliged to call in the aid of the said Baron Pain to decipher it.

Before the emperor commenced making this awful conveyance of his dominions, he asked the opinion of Ney. Ney's look was a sufficient reply. Napoleon quite understood it, and said, "Oui, oui, je vous comprenz Mons. le Marquis donnez moi la plume."

There was a report that, in his agitation at this overpowering moment, he had hacked the little table with a penknife, but it seems without foundation. There are certainly some scars on the mahogany, and we lose by being too fastidious about facts in such cases, where fiction is so much more interesting. The personages who witnessed the execution of this instrument were, Marshals Ney, Berthier, Davout, Pitie, Friant, and Mortier, besides Talleyrand, and the commissioners or deputies from the several courts of England, Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

Over the word *Italie* there was a blot of ink, and the whole of the original document was miserably scrawled, as if in a temper of excessive perturbation. Those, however, who were well acquainted with his hand-writing, tell you that it had become progressively careless and illegible as he advanced in life.

My cicérone over the palace of Fontainebleau was one of the emperor's faithful Mamelukes, about 100 of whom still survive, all employed in some line or other by the present king, though Charles X., being a religious man, had deemed it more charitable to send these poor creatures to the right about.

The gardens round the palace of Fontainebleau are extensive; and laid out à l'anglaise. When viewed in connexion with the magnificent forest by which they are bounded, its interminable vistas, intersected lawns, and broad walks, the effect is equally grand and beautiful. No spot of earth could be better calculated for tranquil, uninterrupted contemplation, for which purpose Napoleon expressly selected it, especially a little island in the adjacent lake, where, we are told, he was accustomed to retire, with his marshals when they talked over their weightiest matters, or projected the operations of the next campaign.

I had some conversation in these gardens, with an old fellow, habited like one of the porters of the palace, who, as the snows of yore had long whitened his tresses, promised some choice information about the olden time, and the history of the chateau for the last half century at least. He said he entered the army as a boy, in the reign

of Louis XV., but that, on the breaking out of the revolution in 1789, he left it, for a retreat near Paris, where he burrowed among the Jews, to be safe from the guillotine. "Ay, that was the time, I remember it well," said a middle-aged, thin, Voltaire-faced, hawk-eyed fellow, who had just joined us; "that was the time when heads rolled in the kennel like paving-stones;" and this he uttered in a tone of such ferocious exultation, that clearly showed he would have been no very unwilling actor in such a scene himself.

Improvisatore at Florence.

One of the most agreeable evenings I passed in Florence, was at the house of a friend, where we were treated with a specimen of amateur improvisation. The performer was a young Tuscan lawyer. The party assembled to hear him were numerous, chiefly composed of enlightened foreigners, and the subject peculiarly interesting, as connected with the revolutionary movement of 1831. After the theme was handed to him on a slip of paper, he required but a very few minutes to collect and arrange his thoughts. It was not a mere string of rhymes he gave us, nor the usual specimen of showy declamation, but a regular-built, blank-vers tragedy, in three acts, of which, in this brief period of preparation, he had contrived to arrange the plot and incidents, and cast the characters. The plot was simple; the hero a conspirator, who had been betrayed by his father, which was an event not very unrequent at the period chosen for the action of the piece. Several of the passages were highly effective, and given in a spirit of noble and dauntless indignation, mingled with deep distress, arising from the peculiar horror of the incidents, and the appalling difficulties of a dilemma so rare in the ordinary tragedy of life.

To me the performance seemed a miracle; yet the Italians think it little of a feat, and when the mechanical part of the art is explained, the surprise abates. The main difficulty is getting a good stock of raw material, which is effected chiefly by storing the memory with passages from the most classic of their poets. Mythology contributes largely to the common fund of the improvisatore's preparation; and the only very difficult part of the execution is, the being able to lay his hands on his materials at the right moment and in the right place.

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The Gatherer.

Stoicism in the Ranks. — "Order and discipline," saith Machiavelli, "are more available in war than valour or force." At the siege of Oczakow, a piquet, advancing to occupy a post, were informed that it was

seized by the Turks, and if they did not retreat they would encounter certain death. "Prince Dolgorouki must answer that," said one of the soldiers. Not a man returned.—*United Service Journal.*

Progress of Discovery.—Among the novelties reported at the last anniversary of the British Association were the following:—The idea of certain astronomers, and, among others, of Herschel, that the nebulae in the milky way are supposed to be a sort of spawn, (as a gardener would say,) of future planets; that the metals in metallic veins are created by electricity and magnetism; that any temperature may be produced on the surface of the earth by drawing heat from the interior, which is supposed to be a mass of liquid fire; that precious stones of every description may be created by chemical and magnetical influence, &c.; that the cow-fish (*Manita fluvialis*), which lives partly in water and partly on land, "might become the universal food of mankind," and be found a good substitute for turtle, &c.—*Gardener's Magazine.*

Sentry Cats.—Robert Brook, Esq., of Melton Lodge, near Woodbridge, in Suffolk, has four or five cats, each with a collar, and light chain and swivel, about a yard long, with a large iron ring at the end. As soon as the gooseberries, currants, and raspberries begin to ripen, a small stake is driven into the ground, or bed, near the trees to be protected, leaving about a yard and a half of the stake above ground; the ring is slipped over the head of the stake, and the cat, thus tethered in sight of the trees, no birds will approach them. Cherry trees and wall-fruit trees are protected in the same manner as they successively ripen. Each cat, by way of a shed, has one of the largest-sized flower-pots laid on its side, within reach of its chain, with a little hay or straw in bad weather, and her food and water placed near her.

In confirmation of the above statement, it may be added, that a wall of vines between 200 and 300 yards long, in the nursery of Mr. Kirke, at Brompton, the fruit of which in all previous seasons had been very much injured by birds, was, in 1831, completely protected in consequence of a cat having voluntarily posted himself sentry upon it.—*Trans. Hortic. Society,* read Nov. 6, 1832.

March of Mind.—There appeared not long since in a shop window near Brooks's Market, a paper bearing the following announcement:—"Portering Work done, Carpets beat, Messages taken, and Poetry composed on any subject." M. A. G.

Humble-bee.—In Devonshire, the verb to *drumble* means to mutter in a sulken, inar-

ticulate, confused voice, and a *drumble-drone* in many places signifies a *drone*, or *humble-bee*. In that old, work entitled *Hawke with you to Saffron Walden*, are these words:—"Your fly in a box is but a *drumble-bee* in comparison of it." Hence it would seem that *Amble-bee*, which has passed the etymologists, is but a vulgar corruption of *drumble-bee*,—bee that *drumble* or utters a confused muttering sound. J. H. P.

Cest.

Why does the rapid sale of many *shillings* worths of the *Mirror* render it more entitled to its name?—Because it is then *bathed* with quick-silver. J. H. P.

Cerbera Tanghin.—We regret to learn that the superstitious use of this terrible poison, in Madagascar, which had been abolished by the late King Radama, has been renewed under the present dynasty. When any supposed offender is charged with guilt a portion of the kernel of this plant, which is peculiar to that island is administered. If it kills the victim, which it generally does in a very short time, unless it operates as an emetic shortly after swallowing, which is but rarely the case, the body is cast into a pit as that of a criminal condemned by providence, and the surrounding populous heap stones upon it until it is completely buried.

Fortunate Tiff.—One of the richest men in England is the Rev. Mr. Hughes, formerly a poor clergyman, but now said to possess a revenue of between 70,000*l.* and 80,000*l.* a-year. Some years ago he was in part proprietor of a barren piece of land, for which Lord Uxbridge was then in treaty. The purchase-money (a very small sum) was agreed upon; but the nobleman not keeping his appointment, one day, to finish the business, the commissaire in a tiff would not give him another meeting. On the above mentioned barren piece of ground, were subsequently discovered the rich *Asprey* copper mines, from which Mr. Hughes draws his enormous income.—*Hampshire Independent.*

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Printed by and for John Lumbird, 143, Strand.

LONDON: Printed and published by J. LUMBIRD, 143, Strand, (near Somerset House;) and sold by all Booksellers and News-men.—*Agent in PARIS* G. W. M. REYNOLDS, French, English, and American Library, 55, Rue Neuve St. Augustin.—*In FRANCFORT, CHARLES JUGEL.*